OCTOBER 1961

LIBRARY
SAN FRANCISCO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
SAN ANSELMO, CALIF.

D14

The Reformed Journal

A PERIODICAL OF REFORMED COMMENT AND OPINION

Anti-Communist Book List LESTER DEKOSTER

Africa Advancing HARRY R. BOER

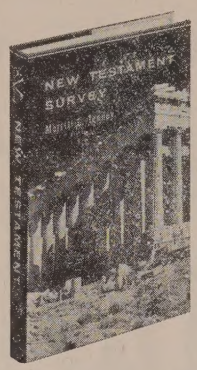
The Spirit of the Reformation JOHN BEVERSLUIS

The Student in Context STEVE J. VAN DER WEELE

Which Belgic Confession? (II) LEONARD VERDUIN

Editorial on Christian anti-Communism
Letters; Book Reviews

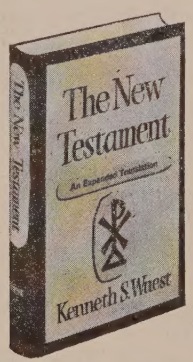
New Testament Survey



by MERRILL C. TENNEY

This superb volume has been revised and enlarged to include latest research on the Dead Sea Scrolls and in other important areas. Now with four-color maps, picture maps and more than 70 illustrations, it is one of the finest volumes for general N.T. study. **Only $5.95**

The New Testament An Expanded Translation



by KENNETH S. WUEST

Now in one complete volume, this unique work, more than any other, enables the English reader to enjoy the full flavor and idiomatic force of the Greek Testament. It is not merely another version but is actually a running commentary on the AV text.

Only $5.95

WM. B. EERDMANS
Publishing Company
Grand Rapids 3, Michigan

The Reformed Journal

A PERIODICAL OF REFORMED COMMENT & OPINION

OCTOBER, 1961

Volume XI No. 9

Editorial Board

HENRY STOB, HARRY R. BOER, JAMES DAANE, LESTER DEKOSTER, GEORGE STOB

Publisher

William B. Eerdmans, Sr.

AS WE SEE IT 3

ANTI-COMMUNIST BOOK LIST 5
Lester DeKoster, *Director of the Library, Calvin College*

AFRICA ADVANCING 9
Harry R Boer, *Missionary in Nigeria*

THE SPIRIT OF THE REFORMATION 12
Jonn Beversluis, *Assistant in Philosophy, Calvin College*

THE STUDENT IN CONTEXT 17
Steve J. Van Der Weele, *Associate Professor of English, Calvin College*

WHICH BELGIC CONFESSION? (II) 19
Leonard Verduin, *Minister at the Campus Chapel, University of Michigan*

LETTERS TO THE JOURNAL 3

BOOK REVIEWS 23

PUBLISHED MONTHLY, excepting August, by the Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, at 231 Jefferson Avenue, S.E., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan. Second-class postage paid at Grand Rapids, Michigan.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: 25c per copy; $2.50 one year; $4.00 two years.

ADDRESS all subscriptions to Subscription Department, *The Reformed Journal*, 231 Jefferson Avenue, S. E., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan. Address all editorial and advertising communications to Managing Editor and Advertising Manager respectively.

Managing Editor: Calvin P. Bulthuis; Advertising Manager: David Wynbeek.

Letters to the Journal

SIRS:

After reading James Daane's editorial, "The Organizational Man," in the June 1961 *Reformed Journal*, I was confronted by a problem which someone through your columns may be able to clarify for me.

It has to do with this clinging to both the Reformation principle that "God alone is the Lord of the conscience" and to the 31st Article of our Church Order. Mr. Daane makes the statement that "often Christian people and Christian churches commit their moral conscience to a larger ecclesiastical organization." I can see this not only brings conflicts but also calls for compromises. But what about a Christian individual committing his moral conscience to that of the Church, so far as the problem of moral conflict is concerned? The editor suggests that "both the individual and the Church must recognize and honor the right of each to act before God." What happens in case of conflict? How does the individual recognize and honor the right of the Church? By suppressing his ideas? by remaining in the Church but not as a member in good standing? or does he travel elsewhere? How does the organizational mind (or conscience?) of the Church recognize and honor the individual in such instances? Can the organized Church have a conscience? or does it have two wills? According to John Ciardi (*Saturday Review*, June 10, 1961), who is defending a statement he made previously in the May 8 issue of that periodical regarding the Catholic Church's authority to select and suppress ideas, "Non-Catholic American intellectual tradition, on the other hand, is powerfully set to resist authority over ideas. That point of division exists, but it need be no point of conflict." Do we as a Church encourage or suppress ideas?

The Age of Conformity is changing into the Age of Criticism, happily so. It seems I recall one of our church-paper writers saying it was unfortunate that the Infallibility Issue had ever been brought to the public, that this should have been discussed (and settled) within the framework of the theologians' workshop. Naturally, I was piqued. Such a thought makes me

(*Continued on page* 22)

As We See It

OPERATION SUSPICION

Books banned in Boston often profit from the experience. Which is to say, they sell. Boston does not ban best-sellers — it creates them.

Some such good fortune as being banned in that town of Cabots, Cods, and Lodges has befallen the two controverted films, *Operation Abolition* and *Communism on the Map*. Weighed by their instrinsic merits, these films might hardly have tipped a milligram scale, but freighted with the verbiage of disputation they have impinged upon the sensitivities of half the nation. The fondest hopes of their producers must have been realized in the hullabaloo which friend and foe alike were able to stir up over so modest a screen debut. It has, indeed, become a kind of challenge to see them, the acquisition of what in sociological jargon is called a status symbol. One casually drops the confession that he has, in fact, viewed them both, perhaps even more than once, and nonchalantly receives the wide-eyed admiration of his daring. He wears much the same air of bravado with which he long ago owned up to having, say, smoked a "cig" behind the barn.

The two experiences are, in a way, not dissimilar. One crosses a Rubicon with that first cigarette, and then wonders upon regaining his equilibrium what was so momentous about it. The emotional thrill passes, and at best leaves him with a bad habit. He has not really attained maturity in a puff. The viewer of these two films flirts with an emotional binge, too. But he may find his recovery slow in coming, and for some time he may not be aware that mature anti-Communism is not attained in a flash of celluloid.

THE SHOCK TREATMENT ADMINISTERED BY THE FILMS MAY ALERT CITIZEN Keene to a threat of which he has been blissfully unaware. So much to the good. But not all shock treatment is therapy. Citizen Keene may find himself gradually possessed by the wrathful feeling that until these films came along everyone, *but everyone!*, was ignorant of the menace of Communism, or, if not ignorant, then its conscious or — to be charitable — unconscious promoters. Even the superior feeling that "all are dupes but me" may steal over him, and he may half sense that he, like Hamlet — and not *Alas!* — was born to set the world aright. Authority, insight, superior awareness of imminent peril never came easier. He has almost become a stranger to himself: how could he have lived so complacently yesterday? He looks about him. How can *anyone* live complacently now? Why, he wonders irritably, is *no* one, or almost no one, in public office gifted with such penetrating insight as he has, in this brief hour, achieved? How is it that Secretary McNamara, for example, could rise to the presidency of a gigantic motor company, and now be so obtuse to Communist conspiracy as to censure General Walker? (Let, in passing, Citizen Keene ask himself that question three times, slowly and seriously, and he may set his own importance as an authority on Communist conspiracies — of which there are indubitably many — in its true and dim perspective; but the films do not encourage him to make such sober self-analysis.)

Already Citizen Keene is falling into the grip of an ancient dilemma: if the man who disagrees with me is not a fool, well, then . . . he must be a knave. The conspiracy is more deadly than he dares suppose. But, after the meeting is over, Citizen Keene finds no conspirators under his bed, in his closet, or hiding in the garage. Nor does he spot them hanging around City Hall or threatening the power plant. Frustrated now as to whom he must battle in his crusade to save America, Citizen Keene may subside into a bad habit, often the consequence of frustration: he may

become intensely *suspicious*. He may even equate well nigh everything, from the floridation of water to progressive education, with the Communist conspiracy.

NOW, SUSPICION IS, ESPECIALLY IN A DEMOCRACY, A VERY deadly thing. Child of frustration, it is sibling of fear. Suspicious citizens can hardly be good citizens, for they *mis*trust; and a democracy operates on *trust*. The suspicious mind is more than any other closed to persuasion, to reason, to discussion; its mode of discourse is the polemic. Suspicion is the corrosion of the social ties which make communication into communion. Suspicion evades even the arms of love; it alienates, estranges, drives asunder. Suspicion is a fearsome thing.

A suspicious mind always finds the "facts" it needs to support its deepest misgivings. I knew once a man who gave up driving his car at night because he came to suspect that whenever he went out on the highway he was being followed, not by one car but by many, operating in coordinated series. When one pursuing pair of headlights passed or turned off, another, by prearranged plan, he thought, drew up behind him. At last he could stand it no longer, perplexing himself with why they followed him so. No persuasion was able to pierce his suspicions. He *saw* them.

And, if you want to gain an insight into such a mind, try it for yourself on the highway some night. Give yourself freely to imagining a series of pursuers on your heels; as one passes or turns away, another, hiding far back perhaps just to fool you, gradually draws up. Even if you are momentarily alone on the road, imagine that this brief respite is only while "they" are laying plans to torment you more. Suppose you stopped the car behind you? or called the police? You know what "they" would do: they would *lie!* Lies! All, everyone, liars! And you, alone, sane. . .!

This is the apex of suspicion, irrational, insurmountable, so intricately deceptive as to be irrefutable, *and finding in the same daily experience which you and I live, all the "proof" it needs for everything it suspects!*

NOW, THIS IS, I THINK THE REAL DANGER POSED BY *Operation Abolition* and *Communism on the Map*: suspicion. Not, to be sure, a suspicion at first gone so nearly mad as the case I have described, but of the same strain and blood as that. These films may well arouse the incautious viewer to a suspicion of nameless dupes and culprits who foolishly or willingly play the Communist game. They may stir the American to a righteous anger which will, at all costs, be up-and-doing. But up-and-doing *what?* fighting *whom?* with what *weapons?* And out of this frustration, *deeper suspicions!*

In all good faith Citizen Keene, and the fellow American who shows him the films, want to fight Communism. Good! But Communism in what form? And how? Lenin studied Marx for a lifetime; and will Citizen Keene on the basis of a film or two, a pamphlet or lecture or "school" become so much an authority on Communism that he must be bombarding his Congressman, firing salvos at distinguished public servants, and suspecting as dupes or fools all who do not feel – "think" is too precise a term – as he does?

WHAT IS WRONG WITH CITIZEN KEENE? HE IS ILL.

He is not, to be sure, suffering from an acute acquaintance with Marxism; but he is in a fever – of *suspicion!* He is set upon a road with no ending, engaged in an unlimited enterprise with severely limited resources. His only test of loyalty threatens to become agreement with his accusations of disloyalty. He is in danger of coming to trust no one, neither the President, nor members of the Supreme Court, nor the military, nor his neighbors – forgetting that trust is the foundation of democracy. He is in danger of believing that none see the Communist menace but those whose views accord with his own, forgetting that countless dedicated public servants have met Communism and Communists face to face and taken their measure. He is in danger of feeling that his is the only voice raised in an immense wilderness of duplicity, blindness, and conspiracy; forgetting that there are true thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal. He is, finally, in danger of becoming himself the easy dupe of traveling lecturers who profess to know more intimately the secret goals and target dates of Communism than do those government servants who have unlimited access to real intelligence.

Now, if Citizen Keene were thus increasingly only the prisoner of his own blind suspicions – for prisoner he is, and eager for company – he might be pitied and left to torment himself. But suspicion is contagious. One victim infects, and desires to infect, another. And gradually a seed-bed is prepared into which noxious weeds may be sown.

A democracy cannot be sustained by suspicion. It can only be undermined by it. Irrational and tyrannical weeds spring up where suspicion and fear have eroded understanding and faith. Beware of suspicion!

ALL THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT AMERICANS SHOULD NOT see these notorious films. What the law and conscience permit, let no one deny. It is a pseudo-liberalism indeed which would prohibit us from viewing at our own risk what we may. Moreover, if an author would be foolish not to want his book banned in Boston for the publicity it affords, would not a film producer rejoice when *Americans* are told *not* to see his wares? It would be an interesting and informative study in the ways of the world to unravel the tangle of controversy which brought these films to national attention, with an eye to discerning who – friend or foe – made the most of his knitting. It is not, after all, for accuracy, insight, or wisdom that their reputation is made.

Let us see them then. As often as we please. Let them compete with other ideas for our allegiance. But let us remember that there is no short-cut to an anti-Communism based on knowledge instead of emotion, and that the fruit of an attempted short-cut may be a *suspicion* which gnaws at the very sinews of the democracy which we all wish mightily to preserve.

–L.D.K.

Anti-Communist Book List

by Lester De Koster

What shall I read about Communism? This question occurs with increasing frequency; and so it should.

Time was, not so long ago, when the study of Marxism required defence. The prevailing mood was then one of suspicion. Too many Americans seemed ready to suppose that those who made some acquaintance with Marxist dogma would at once prefer it to American principles.

Happily this lack of faith in democracy predominates no longer. Authoritative voices like that of J. Edgar Hoover have warned "each citizen" that he has a "duty to learn more about the menace that threatens his future, his home, his children, the peace of the world . . . ." Anti-Communist "schools" draw ever larger crowds, and discussion groups on Communism arise on campuses and in communities.

Except for the vain hope that Communism can be mastered in ten lectures, half a dozen pamphlets, or the viewing of one or two films, all of this interest in *learning* about our enemy evidences a healthy reaction to growing tensions. We have accepted the fact that Communism cannot be conjured out of the world by denunciation alone, and we recognize that it cannot be defeated by ignorance of its philosophy and teaching.

Communism is not, in reality, preferable in any sense to democratic capitalism; Communism is in practice a hideously brutal form of dictatorship; Communism is the cruel ape of religion in arousing hopes and feeding upon aspirations it can only frustrate and destroy. These things being so, the victory over Communism inherent in a vital Christianity can be realized on innumerable fronts where Christian and Communist meet, largely to the extent that Christians *know* their enemy and *practice* what they preach.

This "knowing your enemy" is an arduous business. The literature which has sprung from the soil first tilled by Marx little more than a century ago is now enormous. No one can read it all, least of all each citizen whose duty it is to grasp something of the intent of his foe. The selection of books which follows is intended to help those who take their duty seriously enough to surrender a little recreation, or who will devote less time to *The Saturday Evening Post* or *Ladies' Home Journal* for a year or two in exchange for study. I rather think our enemies and many "neutrals" all over the world do just this. Will you?

But what, then, to read? and where to begin? There are, no doubt, countless satisfactory answers to these questions. I can offer only my own. If it is in any way useful to you, let us join together the growing number of Americans, indeed of persons all over the world, dedicated in the name of one Lord and one passion for liberty to the confrontation and defeat of a malignancy which threatens us and our children.

The books listed below are, I believe, in print, that is, available through a bookseller; all or most of them are probably also in some library available to you. There is one point to remember: this is, in a way, a *reading-course*. It has a beginning and an end. It moves from *understanding* Marxism on through the *Christian refutation* of it. You need not, of course, stay on the train through its whole journey, nor need you pause in each of the cars as recommended; but if you get off half-way there is the risk that you will not get to your intended destination at all, and you may have a confused view of the landscape you have traversed in its relation to the kind of world you hoped to see.

To Begin

1. Isaiah Berlin. *Karl Marx.* Oxford University Press, 1939. Paperback, $1.50.

This is the best single volume on the life and teaching of Karl Marx that I know. It was written for the Home University Library, an indication that it is directed to "everyman" for his spare time. Karl Marx, you must remember, lived on *hope*, and for that hope endured awful poverty. His hope was to guide the world out of poverty and all its concomitants. That in fact his guidance led to the most brutal and systematic of all dictatorships was not his intention, though it was, I think, his fault for supposing that men can redeem themselves. But you will not understand him if you confuse his *hope* with the dictatorship's crunching destruction of hope; remember rather that his hope was the torch to which millions turned, not aware that its brilliance would become "darkness at noon." That is, you will understand Marx best if you remember that he aimed at "heaven"; he did not guess, as we know, that he would set history in motion in another direction.

The Economic Background

2. Robert L. Heilbroner. *The Worldly Philosophers.* Simon & Schuster, 1953. Paperback, $1.50.

Marx asserted that his system arose from the facts of economics and is validated by them. So, getting a little background in economics has its uses for us, and it is interestingly provided by this volume, which includes a useful chapter on Marx.

A more careful study of the "classical economists" Malthus, Ricardo, and Adam Smith can follow from Heilbroner's "Guide to Further Reading," if you care to pursue it. Marx leaned on all three of these theorists to such an extent that he has been charged with contributing nothing new to their teaching. He simply compounded "classical" economic theory into a ferment of his own brewing. This is very likely true; and, incidentally, accounts for the fact that the real criticism of Marxism is rarely confined to his economic theory. Were his theory refuted in all its facets, much of the foundation upon which capitalist practice stands would also be called to question. So one needs a broader scope for both the understanding and the criticism of Marxism than is afforded by economics, and this leads to the next division.

The Philosophical Background

Trotsky has said that without Hegel, that vast and forbidding German thinker, Marx could not have existed. This tantalizing bit sends one scurrying to the shelves for Hegel, who soon enough sends him scurrying back for air. Unless your wish to understand Marx in all his facets has deep roots, the early chapters in Berlin's *Karl Marx*, which you might now wish to re-read, will unite clearly enough the Hegelian and the economic trends in Marxism. If you want to go further, the Edmund Wilson title which follows pursues the ideological background to Marxism from the point of view of "history," which as a philosophical study also owes much to Hegelianism. Some have found Wilson "brilliant"; I find him sometimes also tedious. Suit yourself. If you will "have at" Hegel himself, try numbers 4 to 6.

3. Edmund Wilson. *To the Finland Station.* Doubleday Anchor Book, 1953. Paperback, $1.45.

4. W. T. Stace. *The Philosophy of Hegel.* Dover Publications. Paperback, $2.00.

5. Hegel's "Introduction" to his Lectures on the History of Philosophy. Dover Publications. Paperback, $1.85.

6. Hegel's "Introduction" to his Lectures on the Philosophy of History. The Liberal Arts Press. Paperback, $.85.

If you find yourself bogged down in Hegel, be not dismayed; you keep excellent and numerous company. Promise yourself that you will return one day and go on. At least you know the name now, and can join a good deal of other "scholarship" in running a good bluff a long way. Let's try the master himself.

Karl Marx

Reading *about* Marx is no substitute for reading Marx himself. This is true of all significant books, and this is why the claptrap of manuals, guides, and textbooks which do not lead you to the sourcebooks, the "great" books, are pernicious and stultifying.

But Marx is dull! So one reads. He is a vast desert relieved by only an occasional oasis! If you believe this, you have in store the delight of finding lucid exposition, passionate and powerful prose, moving documentation of human ills, well and carefully selected in number 7. Marx did not play at convictions, nor did he talk one way and live another. It is inevitable, then, that such a man should write from the depths of the soul he denied having. He can be technical, abstruse, bitter, scornful; but leave the legend that he is dull to those who don't read him. This one volume is enough to get the "flavor" and to grasp the leading themes:

7. Karl Marx. *Capital and Other Writings.* Modern Library, 1932.

The Marxists

If a genius exacts from those who follow him the task of understanding him, it is the fate of most followers not to agree in this "understanding." Hegel's ardent disciples split into two streams: a "Left," which found in Hegelianism the motive force for revolution, and a "Right," which found in the same Hegelianism a bulwark of autocracy and the status quo. The "Marxists" also split into two streams: a "Left," which headed for violent revolution, guided by Kautsky, Plekhanov, Trotsky, and Lenin; and a "Right," which sought constitutional and social reforms, guided by Bernstein and Jaures. All quoted Marx as their scriptures; all donned his mantle and clutched it tightly about themselves. To them all, even before he died, the grim old man shouted, "I am no Marxist!" Had he lived to the era of Stalin, he would have not so much shouted as wept.

The best summary of the "Marxists," which includes selections from their own writings, is number 8.

Some selection from their numerous publications is inevitable unless you have a good deal of time at your disposal, and even more patience. Lenin's works rank highest in influence, and he is probably more quoted now in Communist literature than is Marx. His most important works are these: *Materialism and Empirico-Criticism* (1909), a philosophical treatise; *Imperialism* (1917), a development of Marx's belief that capitalism led inexorably to the exploitation of colonial nations and thence to world war; and *State and Revolution,* a blueprint for revolt written while Lenin was engineering one, and published in 1918. Each to his taste, but I prefer for a sample of Lenin an earlier booklet, listed as number 9. It is not only a sustained attack on Bernstein's "deviation," but a program for action written back in the days (1902) when the assurance of success seemed far away.

Stalin wrote heavily, if he wrote his own material at all. A taste of him is enough — more than enough if you are in a hurry — except, and this is an important "except," his ponderous grayness of style reflects truly enough the grim leveling-off which planning salvation by dictatorship is bound to imply. Kautsky, interestingly, concerned himself with religious "communism." I add the title as another facet of the "mind" of Marxism.

8. Sidney Hook. *Marx and the Marxists.* Van Nostrand, 1955. Paperback, $1.25.

9. V. I. Lenin. *What is to be Done?* International, 1920 (Paperback)

10. J. Stalin. *Foundations of Leninism.* International, 1930 (Paperback).

11. K. Kautsky. *Communism in Central Europe in the Time of the Reformation.* Russell, 1959.

The Russian Revolution

12. Bertram Wolfe. *Three Who Made a Revolution.* Beacon, 1955. Paperback, $2.95.

13. Leon Trotsky. *The History of the Russian Revolution.* Simon & Schuster, 1932-34.

14. John Reed. *Ten Days that Shook the World.* Modern Library, 1935. Paperback, $1.25.

15. Hugh Seton-Watson. *From Lenin to Khrushchev.* Praeger, 1960. Paperback, $1.95.

16. George Kennan. *Russia and the West.* Atlantic-Little Brown, 1960-61.

Marx remarked in one of his *Theses on Feuerbach* (a German "theologian" whose name, if not his works, rates more than passing interest in the development of Marx's materialism) that while some people seek merely to *understand* the world, they — the Communists — intend to *change* it. This useful distinction is not in itself Marxist. Turning the world upside down was attributed to disciples earlier than those of Karl Marx. If those "other disciples" had been more true to their own calling in the centuries following the Renaissance, say, Karl Marx might have been unnecessary. In fact, he might have been one of them! What a speculation: Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky pouring out in the service of the true Lord their matchless genius for turning worlds upside down! Instead, the Lord had to use them to teach His own would-be disciples that they were a little laggard, to say no more.

Anyhow, Marx aimed at using knowledge for action, and pointed up once again the abiding gulf between those who seek learning for possession and those who seek it for use. And in due season came the "proof of the pudding" — a revolution! It came where Marx least expected it, and in a manner not predicted for it. But it came; and now the only way the Marxist who once accepted Marx's views because he accepted Marx's "hope" for heaven-on-earth can still accept that hope is by denying that what happened in Russia is the logical and inevitable conclusion from Marx's premises. Can one be a Marxist and not go down the road of brutalizing terror, moving steadily farther and farther from the dream with which Marxism first attracts its devotees? The Russian (and Chinese) experiment gives but one answer: NO! For Russia is not a Marxist deviation; it is a Marxist necessity: if man has to save himself he will destroy his neighbor in the attempt. We live in that time when Marx's "change" has been wrought; that the result is so far from what he hoped is the measure of his own misapprehension of what he believed and taught. Countless Marxists, recognizing soon or late that Russia is the nadir and desolation of their aspirations for social justice, have left the Communist Party in anguished disillusionment. What these ask of *us* now is what "change" in the world our profession of Christianity produces; for that distinction between knowledge (of God) *for understanding* and knowledge (of God) *for use* in turning a corrupt world upside down is not undone. They hear what we *say* — Marx probably knew theology from his friend Bruno Baur better than most laymen — but they want to know what we *do,* and *intend* to do, about the social problems that drove them to Marxism in the first place. Well, what do we?

So the theory came out of the books and into history, in Russia, in 1917. How it made that passage from book to deed cannot better be told than Wolfe does it in number 12 — all the more incredible because it is true. If one's taste runs to detective fiction, and if he can hardly put down the miserable thing until the plot is dissolved, he may find himself reading through to the gray light of dawn in this tale of plots and counter-plots which brought the world to its present agony. There is the chapter on the Russian police spy, Malinovsky, who wormed his way so securely into Lenin's confidence that he knew the inmost secrets of the plotters, indeed was entrusted with carrying out some of them! And there was the endless infighting . . . but try it yourself! The path to Marxist paradise, like the paradise itself, was thick with intrigue and sometimes ran with blood.

Wolfe stops in 1917. No matter, for now one of the two chief actors on that gigantic stage, one sixth of the globe's surface, takes up the story himself, and leaves behind him three volumes that rank already with the Hundred Great Books and always will. After you read Trotsky, most histories will seem boundlessly uninspired, other irony will show a duller edge, other magnificent generalizations will have a lesser range and suggestiveness, the pace of other tellers of tales (true or imaginary) will seem uncommonly slow. Hardly so much a *history* as a *philosophy* of history woven around historical events, this book is dwarfed only by the deeds it recounts. Whether Trotsky could be objective at

all, and whether his accuracy is unimpeachable can be endlessly debated. He can be checked by other histories, but in terms of its purposes, his is not likely to be equalled.

One check on Trotsky, though in fact written through friendly eyes and commended by Trotsky himself, is John Reed's *Ten Days,* an eye-witness' account of those hectic ten days in the fall of 1917 when the power was shifting to the hands stretched forth by Lenin and Trotsky to seize it. This book, too, has the lineaments of a "classic," but you will want to continue the story at once with Ambassador Kennan's masterful, knowledgeable, and incisive study. This book is not only one of the latest upon its subject, but surely the most authoritative. You might supplement it by Seton-Watson. Especially with Mr. Kennan's critique, we are now full into a critical evaluation of those changes Marxism hath made on the surface of the globe. The picture is not nice, but it is instructive, and a warning!

Communism in America

A film or two, and a course of lectures or pamphlets are not the best guides either to Communism itself or to its threat to ourselves. If they arouse our interest and stimulate our study, they serve well; if we are led to suppose that now Communism is our oyster — as the phrase goes — they have misled us. An emotional binge is not competent anti-Communism.

There are competent guides to the Communists in America:

17. J. Edgar Hoover. *Masters of Deceit.* Pocket Books, Inc. Paperback, $.50.

18. M. Ernest, & D. Loth. *Report on the American Communist.* Holt, 1952.

Mr. Hoover writes with the authority which is his earned right, and with the discretion born of lengthy experience with this powerful and subtle adversary. He offers not only a sketch of the apparatus, but also of the ex-Communist, who is more fully described in number 18, where the story of some three hundred former Communists is analyzed. Mr. Hoover adds a useful glossary and brief notes on major Communist "classics." The book is a tribute to the man whose administration of the police power of a modern state cannot be sufficiently lauded. Start your anti-Communism from this, and be thankful for the F. B. I.

Anti-Communism

Marxism has exercised a magnetic attraction upon many gifted persons keenly sensitive to social problems. It is an indictment of Christians not lightly to be dismissed that men and women dedicated to the amelioration of human suffering in all its forms were attracted more by Marxism than by Christianity in action. And when those gifted ones found that the promise of Marxism was grotesquely false, those who could write exposed their disillusion in memorable words. You must not miss what is in many respects the most telling and devastating indictment of Communism anywhere to be found:

19. Richard Crossman, editor. *The God that Failed.* Bantam Books, Inc. Paperback, $.50.

20. Howard Fast. *The Naked God.* Praeger, 1957.

Perhaps you will want also to read the indictment in the form of the novel: Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* (New American Library, Paperback, $.50) and *The Yogi and the Commissar,* or Orwell's *Animal Farm* and *1984* (both published by New American Library, paperback, each $.50), or Huxley's *Brave New World,* and the later, *Brave New World Revisited* (both published by Bantam Books, paperback, each $.50), though none of these pricks with such awful certainty the illusions of the *Communist Manifesto* as do Koestler's, Silone's, and Wright's essays in number 19, and Fast's convulsive number 20.

Christianity and Communism

If not Communism, what then for those who believe the world needs changing to make it better than it is? Don't let us answer too glibly lest we be held responsible for our words.

But the answer is not secular liberalism, obviously, for Marx himself grew up and out of this. That after Adam Smith came Marx is no tribute to Smith, and a warning to those who want to return to his *laissez faire.* Nor is the answer some form of philosophical idealism, even that which substitutes contemplation of the Idea, in one form or another, for conduct. For the world moves on while the contemplatives watch or debate, and leaves them behind if not in the lurch. Nor is the answer some form of historicism which pleads inability to alter a present because it is bound by a past. None of these, though all are tried and some are advertised.

The answer stares out at us from the titles the ex-Communists choose to summarize their own disappointment: their god has failed. Because he was not really God at all, though he wore the garments and spoke the language of a liberator. What men need is a God who fails not. That a false and empty god could evoke a devotion and a sacrifice indisputable and awesome is a living witness to the longing of the human heart for its true Maker. Let this be *said,* then; and equally important, as Pope Pius XI said, let it be *lived* by those who teach it.

For Christian doctrine was being taught in Marx's time, and in Lenin's. But the society they saw exhibited too few signs of the redeeming power of that doctrine. There is something of the inevitable about the relation between the preaching and the practicing of any doctrine. After Leon Trotsky

broke with Stalin and was expelled from Russia, it was not a question *if* the assassin would come to kill him; it was only a question *when* he would come. And he came, and Trotsky is dead. Again, when men seek to establish a society based upon the denial of God and God-based human rights, it is not a question *if* this society must become a dictatorship; it is only a question *when* it becomes one, and how ruthless that dictatorship will be. And Russia has become such a dictatorship, the most systematically ruthless in all history; and many, many more than Trotsky are dead. And again, the relation still holds: if a highly developed theoretical Christianity ignores the *double* injunction of the Law, seeking to love God and to avoid man, it is not a question *if* this hypocrisy will be found out; it is only a question of how long the process will take, and what forms of retribution time will exact.

We may expose Communism until its very bones waste away under our critique, but if our own Christianity has no effect upon the society in which we live, what will it profit us to gain the whole world from under the Communist nose? We are *against* Communism! Good! So are many ex-Communists! But what are we *for?*

This matter of the polar contest between Christianity and Communism is best explored, I think, by:

21. Jacques Maritain. *True Humanism.* Bles, 1946.

Professor Maritain provides some clear insight into the demands for a positive Christian approach to the modern era, though all of his conclusions should not go unmodified.

There are a great many useful books on this confrontation of the true God and the false, among them:

22. John C. Bennett. *Christianity and Communism Today.* Association, 1960. This is a revision of his *Christianity and Communism* published in 1948.

The latest Catholic critique is:

23. Henri Chambre. *Christianity and Communism.* Hawthorn, 1960 (Volume 96 of the *20th Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism*).

A Christian Society

But if Christianity is also concerned with changing as well as with understanding the world, what is its program? This opens a wide area of discussion, and impinges upon our task in our time. The thought of Calvin has received fluent and comprehensive exposition in a title unfortunately not yet translated into English:

24. Henri Bieler. *La Pensée Economique et Sociale de Calvin.* Georg, 1959.

The Catholic position, ably expounded by Maritain, receives its definition in the famous Encyclicals (re-affirmed by Pope John in *Mater et Magistra,* 1961) *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931).

Archbishop William Temple, who frequently addressed himself to the social implications of Christianity, summarized his views in:

25. *Christianity and Social Order.* Penguin Books, 1942. Paperback, $.95.

And . . .

There is no logical reason for stopping with twenty-five titles. Nor need you. But the understanding of these will go a long way to satisfying that "duty" Mr. Hoover writes of. And that is something.

If in addition Christian men and women of all denominations and all lands join hands for the realization of Christianity-in-society, thankful for what is now done in His name and determined that ever more shall be done — that is everything!

Study, then, to drive out the bad and bring in goodness among men, asking wisdom from on high, and courage, and devotion.

Africa Advancing

by Harry R. Boer

AS IT IS TRUE THAT AFRICA IS THE LAST OF THE CONtinents to enter actively into the life of the world community, so it is true that no continent has ever entered upon the international scene so abruptly and so tumultuously. It is hardly four and a half years ago — March 1957 — that Ghana became the first colony in a huge continent full of colonies to achieve independence. In the four years that followed, colony after colony became independent, climaxing in the chaos of Congo independence. The French and the Belgians have lost all authority south of the Sahara; the British have very little left, and the Portugese will soon lose what they have.

To the far south a significant and possibly fateful step was taken by the Union of South Africa when it decided to leave the Commonwealth. Perhaps she thought it better to leave voluntarily than to risk expulsion by the Commonwealth whose annual meetings of Prime Ministers have for some time no longer been meetings between agreeing whites (Britain, Canada, Union of South Africa, New Zealand, Australia) but also of hardheaded non-Europeans like Nehru, Abu Bakr and Nkrumah to whom South Africa's racial policy is utter anathema. So now

the Union stands completely alone as it pursues its racial aims. It never had much company, but in the Commonwealth it did have a shelter after a sort. Now that is quite gone too.

In the far north, the Algerian crisis continues to dominate the scene. But that scene, confused and desperate as it has been, is now even more complex and difficult than it was. Tunisia's Habib Bourguiba seems to feel that his country's pro-Western policy has not been the most rewarding thing in the world. Sensing either victory or substantial advantage in the offing for the Algerians in their contest and negotiations with the French, he seems to feel in danger of becoming a victim of his own virtue. Suddenly a piece of land for which no one has ever given a continental has became an issue of international diplomacy — the vast and empty Sahara. It is surmised that Bourguiba senses Algerian control or co-control over this area, and he wants to be in on the spoils. The reason for the rapid rise in Saharan real estate is not its proverbial heat or dryness, or its oases, or its size, or its veiled nomadic Tuaregs, but its recently discovered oil deep down in the bosom of the desert. It is over the Sahara that talks between the French and the Algerian nationalists have broken down, and it is probably in large part the Sahara that is behind Tunisia's change of direction.

With all the tensions now existing that have been occasioned by the Algerian-French-Tunisian situation in these countries respectively, in North Africa as a whole, in the conflicting interests between East and West, and now lately in the United Nations, there stands one figure whose heroic stature is not yet wholly assured and who may become wholly tragic. De Gaulle's place in history will be determinded by his success or lack of success in the issue that he himself has chosen as the test of his leadership and statesmanship — the Algerian crisis. This situation is now more serious, more ambiguous and problematical than ever, and an anxious world awaits the outcome of the dramatic interplay of forces which cannot but crystallize in one direction or another before very long.

But when all is said and done, the Africa that has always captured the imagination of men is not the Moslem, semi-European southern shore of the Mediterranean, or the largely white civilization at the southern tip of the continent, but the vast geographic and human area that lies south of the Sahara, the traditional "dark" continent. It is here, not in the north or in the south, that the fundamental direction of Africa into the beckoning but unknown future will be determined.

In this area significant things have been happening lately. The most hopeful development in recent events in Africa is the increasing clarification of the situation in the Congo. As of now there is restrained hope that a unified country may yet emerge out of the chaos that has prevailed. Perhaps this possibility began to open with the death of Lumumba around whose mercurial character no national unity could possibly have been built. It is now a question whether the three chief leaders of the Congo — Kasavubu of the west, Gizenga in the east, and Tshombe in the south can trust each other sufficiently to work together.

One thing is certain: if anything sensible develops politically in the Congo, Africa and the world will owe an immeasurable debt to the United Nations, and to its Secretary General in very particular. Amid all the confusion, mistakes, criticism and dilemmas that have attended the UN intervention in the Congo, one thing has remained constant: the UN's determination that the Congo shall settle its own affairs. Lumumba's American business angel, Nkrumah's messianism, and Soviet Russia's designs have, in one way or another, all been sent packing. An African solution is developing, and we may yet see a vindication of the policies which Mr. Hammerskjold so single-mindedly pursued.

In Angola a pattern is developing which is as futile as it is familiar. There seems to be no mind quite so unteachable as the typically colonial mind. Having had power and control for many years, the colonial mind cannot imagine itself surrendering this power and control. When it is forced to make concessions, it seeks to postpone the evil day of full surrender into a distant future during while it self-sacrificially "prepares" its subjects for self-government. The subjects are generally quite intractable, and then begins the tug-of-war which ends sooner rather than later with a complete victory for the as yet "unprepared" colonial population.

The Portuguese government has now announced a number of "reforms" intended to give the people in Mozambique (Portuguese east Africa), Angola (Portuguese west Africa), and Portuguese Guinea a greater voice in their own affairs. But so hedged about with qualifications — especially for an educational nature — are these reforms that to many, and certainly to the African leadership concerned, they look like a poorly disguised effort to retain white control after all. One of the most important qualifications for voting in the new scheme of things is the requirement of being able to read and write. But what kind of step is this in the direction of self-government when only two percent of the population are literate? It is therefore reasonable to look for a period of great unrest in the Portuguese territories until the Portuguese authority, like others before it, have learned that too little too late is not a very good way to give independence to colonies. Meanwhile, it is amusing to read of the Portuguese official commenting on the introduction of the reforms, "Remember, we are doing this of our own accord and not under pressure either from our friends or

our enemies." It is quite amazing how rioting, carnage, murder, and international opinion can stimulate the disinterested philanthropic spirit of man.

Just south of the Congo the Central Africa Federation of Southern and Northern Rhodesia and Nyassaland has not yet found itself. The large black majority feels that the whites have too dominant a voice in proportion to their numbers, and dissolution of the uneasy union is not an impossibility. But to the northeast a stabler African federation may be in the making as Kenya and Tanganyika contemplate union with the possible inclusion of Uganda. Tanganyika is scheduled to receive independence soon, and Uganda and Kenya will not be very far behind. What gives promise to this union is the fact that it will be a wholly African conceived and executed affair, and its head will undoubtedly be the most trusted leader in the whole of East Africa, Julius Nyerere, the Prime Minister of Tanganyika.

The former French colonies, now independent countries, stretching from the Atlantic to the heart of equatorial Africa, are quiet and this is a good sign. They are a part of the "French Community" and not averse to the connections afforded by France with Europe and possibly with the Common Market. In fact, undramatic but hard work seems to characterize the whole of West Africa at the present time. This preoccupation with local and national concerns is the healthiest sign of an advancing continent that could be asked for. This is especially true of Nigeria. We shall conclude this brief Africa review with a few remarks on her place in the sun.

So far, no country in Africa presents a more hopeful and promising future than the Federation of Nigeria. It has a population three times that of the most populous countries in the continent. It has extensive natural resources. It enjoys political stability. In fact, there is in Nigeria what can probably be found in no other African country at the present time — a built-in guarantee against dictatorship or one-party government. Nigeria is truly a *federation.* Each of the three states (called Regions) that comprise it is large, self-conscious, and influential. Government can only be by coalition. Abu Bakr Tafawa Balewa, the Prime Minister, is not a dramatic man, but he enjoys respect at home and abroad. Nigeria apparently intends to make her impact on Africa and on the world through her total product, weight and influence rather than through the eloquence and cleverness of a leader.

In May there was an election in Northern Nigeria. It had, it seems to me, a significance that goes rather far beyond the borders of the Region in which the election took place and is therefore worth noting here. When Nigeria became politically self-conscious, the British built up a parliamentary system of government for the eventual assumption by Nigeria of full governmental responsibility. This has included the introduction or encouragement of minority (eventually Opposition) parties. Northern Nigeria, too, had its minority and consequently Opposition parties. The Regional election in May nearly wiped them out. Opposition parties in Africa are not regarded in the same way as they are in the West. They are looked upon by the ruling party more as a threat and a nuisance than as an essential element in the machinery of government. In Ghana the Opposition has virtually been eliminated. In Nigeria there has been no forceful elimination of Opposition parties. The African political nature has just asserted itself and the result is one dominant all-powerful party in each Region. While the requirement of coalition will prevent one-party rule on the national level, there is by the same token no truly national Opposition party, nor really effective Opposition parties on the Regional level. Julius Nyerere whose party recently swept all the seats in the Tanganyika election is quoted as saying that if there were to be an Opposition party in Tanganyika he'd have to create it himself.

This significant development in African politics shows one thing very clearly: Western institutions can be imported into Africa, but they will have a very short life indeed if they are not congenial to African needs and spirit. Democracy in its Western organizational form is clearly not one of these institutions. This does not mean that Africa will for this reason not be well governed. It will probably be better governed the African way than the European way. It is only to be hoped that when the West comes to understand that its democracy is not usable in Africa — at least not in its European or American form — it will not esteem Africa the less.

The Western Church and her missions may well learn a profitable lesson from this development. As Africa wants government but not necessarily Western forms of government, so the Church can flourish in Africa but not necessarily in its Western manifestations. Already signs are developing that the African Church intends to go its own way, living its own life and moulding its own thought. Let this be our service to the African Church that, with the light and understanding that we have, we help her to be her best self — the true Body of Christ in true African garb.

We are happy to report that two of the Editors have returned to their posts of duty. Henry Stob is again at Calvin Seminary, having studied for a year in England, and Harry Boer is again at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria, having spent a furlough of six months in the United States.

The Staff is also pleased to announce that James Daane has taken the position of Editorial Associate with the well-known international Christian bi-weekly magazine, *Christianity Today.* Dr. Daane will continue to serve the *Journal* as one of the Editors and regular contributors.

The Spirit of the Reformation

by John Beversluis

IT HARDLY SEEMS NECESSARY TO ANNOUNCE THAT we are again approaching Reformation Day. Of all the days in the Protestant year this is one of the least likely to pass unobserved. Many of us may need to be reminded of "lesser" days like Pentecost or Ascension Day, which somehow always seems to come as a thief in the night; but Reformation Day is unavoidable.

Now, the fact that we commemorate the Protestant Reformation is natural. We are not Roman Catholics. The Reformation stands as a glorious fact in history. It bears witness to the concern of God for the welfare of His Church in that He used the Reformers to correct the abuses and the errors and to bring back into focus the essential truths of the Scriptures. The Reformers were not making innovations. It was the Roman Church which had made innovations; and the result had been the gradual obscuring of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A Reformation was needed, and the fact that it came about is something for which we ought to be constantly grateful.

The open Bible, the immediate access to God through the one Mediator, the doctrine of justification by faith, the belief that every man is prophet, priest and king, the new emphasis on the Biblical concept of sin and what it means to be fallen — all of these are hallmarks of Reformation theology. And no Protestant can afford to treat them lightly or regard them with indifference. The distinction between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism is not slight; the differences are deep and the implications make them deeper still.

It is, therefore, a good thing for all of us in the Protestant tradition to be thankful for the Reformation. To ignore it or to minimize it would show a marked lack of religious sensitivity for the truth. The God who is disclosed in the Bible is infinitely knowable, and man is not properly man until he knows Him rightly. And right beliefs, although they are not all that is necessary, are, nonetheless, indispensable means for the sinner searching after Him. Knowledge is essential. Doctrine matters. And the Reformation underscored the importance of them both.

BUT IF THIS IS ALL WE MEAN WHEN WE TALK about the Reformation, and if our commemoration of it goes no further, we are, I think, missing a great deal. For it was not, in principle, a cold, loveless battle about the theological doctrines and their perversions. Because human beings are imperfect, this is what it sometimes became; but basically it was not a conflict which took place in the head alone. It was not, that is to say, an abstract juxtaposing of one set of formulae over against another. It was essentially a conflict in the heart. Martin Luther, the monk, was not distressed first of all because the Epistle to the Romans said something different from his catechism book. He was distressed because he could not make his peace with God. It was a conflict in which he was totally involved as a human being, not a problem which he was required to work out as a student. It was something inescapable and significant both for time and eternity. And when he discovered the meaning of the Pauline statement about being justified by faith, he did not rest knowing that his head had now grasped the essence of the Gospel. He was possessed by it, and was soon to become, as Paul had, the prisoner of Jesus Christ. This was the answer to the problem of sin and the law. Man does not find God by conquering sin; man surrenders to Christ who has Himself conquered sin. Salvation is not attained by announcing one's victory; it is received by admitting one's defeat. This was what Luther discovered in his own experience. And it was the turning point in his life, although he did not yet realize it at the time.

He then began to question the teachings of his Church at certain points, and finally he nailed his ninety-five theses to the castle door at Wittenburg. He did not, however, become immediately hostile and start a kind of crusade for sound doctrine at any cost. What he wanted was a clarification. He did not behave as a rebel, but as a son of the Church. His intention was not to bring about the Protestant Reformation. For as he remarked later, he had no idea at the time what the far-reaching results of that act would be. In short, he merely wanted to make the subject of indulgences (which he felt was a serious error) the topic for theological debate. And the way in which one did that in those days was to nail a notice to the castle door. It was, in itself, a very usual procedure.

Those who learn their church history from pictures on the covers of religious magazines and pamphlets may, of course, have a different view of the beginnings of the Reformation, a much more clear-cut and dramatic view. And the popular view of the Reformation is admittedly much more dramatic. It is also much more "inspiring." A Luther marching off to the castle with the Reformation on his mind and the means for bringing it about under his arm is much more exciting than a Luther doing what many other monks had done

about many other subjects. The Reformation, however, did not begin with an explosion. The drama came later when Luther realized that the theology which emerged from these early experiences was so radically different from the theology of his Church, that a severe controversy was inevitable and that a reconciliation was unlikely.

I HAVE SAID THAT THE REFORMATION WAS NOT FIRST of all an intellectual battle about doctrines. In saying this I do not mean, of course, to advance the absurd thesis that doctrine was irrelevant. The Protestant Reformers were profoundly interested in what the Bible actually taught, and to be interested in teachings is to be interested in doctrine. They were not, however, interested in doctrine for its own sake, but as a means for getting at something much more urgent. And if we are to catch their spirit, it seems as if we too will have to get beyond purely intellectual discussions, beyond mere theology. Christ, after all, did not die simply in order that the world could have orthodox theologians.

Beyond pure doctrine and orthodox theology is the thing that Christianity is really all about: commitment to Christ. And real commitment can come about only when there is direct access to God. This is what the Reformers saw so much more clearly than the Church of their day. It must be said, however, that it was not a case of the Reformers realizing that commitment was necessary and the Church not realizing it. Both were equally in favor of commitment. The difference lay elsewhere. The issue was not: shall I commit myself or not? It was: to what shall I commit myself? And the answer of the Reformers came out of the insight that their experience within the Church had taught them: the weakness of the Church's insistence that men should commit themselves to it as Church. The Reformers denied this claim; they maintained that commitment is not to a Church but to a Person. The Church would probably have granted them this "technical" distinction if they had pressed it, but it would have at the same time argued that one commits himself to the Person precisely by commiting himself to the Church. And this the Reformers would not grant. They realized that there was so much in the Church which obscured this very point, so much attention to external rituals and so little to the central religious issues that it was highly improbable that anyone but the clergy was even aware of the formal distinction. Salvation for far too many in that day (as in our own) meant the Church, whereas for the Reformers salvation meant Christ. Thus they emphasized the kind of commitment which was true to the Biblical demands. And they were convinced that from immediate access to God would emerge more spontaneously and more intimately the joy in the atoning work of Christ, the confidence of the forgiveness of sin and the promise of eternally sharing in the love of God in Christ. That is, they wanted men to know what immediate access to God was in their own experience. Their doctrine of prophet, priest and king was important, but secondary. A description of what the reality is like is nothing in comparison to the actual possession of the reality.

Mere lip service to Reformation doctrine seems, therefore, to be a mockery of it. It does no good to laud the movement or the doctrines which came from the movement if we do not realize that the Reformation took place because Martin Luther and many of his generation thirsted for God, panted after Him "as pants the hart." They looked beyond the Church and beyond doctrine to the Head, Truth Himself. And only those who share the thirst, in addition to the doctrine, can commemorate the Reformation rightly. For those who are to see God are the pure in heart, not the pure in doctrine only.

IT WOULD, OF COURSE, BE MUCH EASIER TO COMMEMorate the Reformation as if it were a wholly doctrinal affair. We could then romanticize it and speak of it simply as a "movement" or as a group of ideas which ought to be the paradigm for our thinking. We could proceed next to contrast it to non-Reformation ideas and anti-Reformation movements. We could rally around the banner of truth-in-the-abstract while at the same time we could hate and attack error-in-the-abstract. The Reformation would, in that kind of commemoration, have become a black and white matter, a case of the wrong against the wronged, those in error against those in the truth, darkness against light, Satan against Christ.

But as soon as we realize that nothing is quite as simple as that; as soon as we remember that the Reformation was not a depersonalized "movement," that it involved men and women, everything changes. For as soon as you have men and women involved, you have left the realm of truth-in-the-abstract and error-in-the-abstract; and all neat distinctions disappear. You are back in history, and history is complex. Unqualified praise or unqualified criticism is not so much wrong as simply foolish. No one is wholly bad or wholly good. Which is only to say that we ought to have the humility and the good sense to realize that there was also sin in the Reformation. It was not a case of the Reformers doing everything right and the Church doing everything wrong. In spite of the fact that the differences between them were often such that the Reformers could appeal to the Scriptures to validate their claims, and in spite of the fact that the Reformation was a tragic necessity, we cannot afford to be simplistic and make the mistake of comparing the Reformers at their best with the Church at its worst and then call that the Protestant Reformation.

Much less ought we to write and preach about it in such a way that we allow it to become a kind of theological "cops and robbers" in which absolute purity met absolute corruption head on and defeated it once and for all. This simply did not happen.

The Reformers, although they were men of stature both as Biblical scholars and as devout human beings, were nevertheless still fallen men. And, as such, they shared in the same depravity as the Church which they attacked and from which they finally withdrew. This does not mean that the Reformation was not necessary, but it does mean that we who commemorate it should never forget that the difference between the Reformers and the existing Church was, generically speaking, a difference of degree rather than one of kind. And we too share in that same depravity, in that same sin. For sin is not basically an act or even a series of acts which we can commit or refrain from committing. Sin is basically a condition in which we all share quite apart from what we do or what we do not do. And it is sin as a condition which ultimately alienates us from God, and which makes total renewal a necessity. Our acts, no matter how wicked they are, are only effects of which our condition is the cause.

It, therefore, becomes quite apparent that we cannot become condescending on Reformation Day or "look down" on the Roman Catholic Church as if we were essentially different from it so far as our fallen human condition is concerned. For we are both, in that sense, in the same predicament. Protestants are just as fallen as Catholics. Although at many points we, as Protestants, believe that we are more Scriptural than they, we should not conclude that we necessarily occupy a more favorable position in the sight of God. Being doctrinally Scriptural does not, in itself, sanctify anyone. And the most convincing example of that is Satan himself, who not only beats us at our own depravity but at our own orthodoxy as well. He can appeal to the Scriptures in a way which should make the greatest theologian blush for sheer embarrassment.

OVERCONFIDENCE, THAT IS, LOOKING DOWN ON Roman Catholics as if they were automatically inferior Christians, is not, however, the only temptation which Reformation Day provides. There are other dangers. We must remember that we are under obligation to give offence to no man. And this would seem to apply especially to those who profess the same Lord. One does not witness effectively by humiliating, injuring or thundering against those in error. All faith and all knowledge are nothing when they have driven out love. We must be careful lest our words be marked by a malice and suspicion which, in their more extreme forms, could result in positive hatred for anything Roman Catholic. We must deny ourselves those gratifying bits of sarcasm and ridicule which so easily seduce us, and avoid all forms of evasion and pretence such as calling hostility and contempt "concern for the Body of Christ." Prejudice has many faces, and some of them look very innocent. We must resist the strong tendency to confuse loyalty to our own particular church with loyalty to Christ. We must refuse to allow our children to acquire an understanding of the Reformation which is both historically inaccurate and morally dishonest. That is, we should be more interested in true understanding than in mere Protestant propaganda even if the truth makes us uncomfortable. For one of the functions of Truth is to give us that particular form of self-knowledge which we often so fervently avoid.

All of these and many other, sometimes very appealing, temptations we must emphatically decline. We must put them behind us. If our eye offends us, we must pluck it out. And this is difficult to do because many of these things seem, on the surface, to be so right, so full of pious intent. We seem to be doing them with the purest of all possible motives. This is what Mauriac calls "the eternal excuse," doing things "for God." C. S. Lewis has hit upon something very valuable when he says, "It is great men, potential saints, not little men, who become merciless fanatics. Those who are readiest to die for a cause may easily become those who are readiest to kill for it." Only He who knows what is in the heart of man knows how much prejudice, intolerance, persecution, slander, gossip, cruelty, hatred and presumption can result from men doing things "for God."

What, then, is our alternative? Are doctrinal differences irrelevant? Are all creeds and all practices equally acceptable provided only that one is sincere? Should Protestants and Catholics forget their differences and unite on the basis of some vague and undefined sense of "oneness"? Was the Reformation simply the result of impulsiveness and short tempers? To ask these questions is, of course, to answer them. We are Protestants. The Reformation heritage is, and shall, by the grace of God (and by hard work on our part), remain ours. But what must not become a part of that heritage is a kind of mental block against Roman Catholicism which shows itself occasionally in the form of a certain defiance and arrogance. Although the Reformation resulted in many deep-seated differences between Protestants and Catholics and occasioned many strong feelings and, at times, violent outbursts between them, yet these feelings must be disciplined rigidly so that the Roman Catholic problem does not become, so far as we are concerned, a personal one. Under no circumstances may man without effrontery think and judge with the mind of God. There is room at the foot of the

cross of Christ for all kinds of differences and for all types of people; but the slope is steep and only the humble, those willing to forget their "dignity" and "distinctiveness," are able to climb it.

BUT THERE IS ANOTHER REASON WHY WE MUST commemorate Reformation Day carefully and thoughtfully. For in spite of the fact that the Reformation took place, and in spite of the fact that the Church as the Reformers found it was in urgent need of reform, it nevertheless is also true that there remained a certain continuity between the Reformers and the existing Church. And that continuity still persists today. We speak with legitimate pride of our Reformation heritage, but we must remember that this is neither our only heritage nor our oldest. The Reformation does not wrench us out of history. And therefore we simply cannot afford to act as if we have disassociated ourselves completely from the institution which was for more than a thousand years the vehicle through which God worked, and to which properly belonged the name of "the Body of Christ." It will not do to call this institution the "Catholic Church." It was not the Catholic Church; it was the Christian Church of the Middle Ages.

The fact is that the deepest roots of the authentic Christian tradition go back to the early church by way of the Middle Ages, which means by way of the Medieval Church. There is simply no way to avoid it. Contemporary Protestants and contemporary Roman Catholics have a common history. And without that common history a good deal of what we call "Protestant" doctrine would be either nonexistent or decidedly impoverished. Although it is true that revelation comes from God, history is the medium through which He works. We "ask no dream, no prophet ecstasies." The Christian religion stands or falls on its claim of being historical. It is the only religion which is enacted completely within an historical context. There is no mysticism in it. The disciples, on one occasion, think that Christ is a ghost. They think that He is being "mystical," but He eats fish very early in the morning. There is hardly anything less mystical than that. He is real. He is an historical figure. He was "born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell." This is not allegory. There are no hidden meanings. This is what happened. And later the risen and ascended Lord sends the Comforter, who also works in history. Christianity, both in its beginnings and in its later development, is inseparably connected with history. And that history is extremely important. We cannot adequately understand our faith without it. As A. C. Outler has pointed out, "The importance of the Christian tradition can be appreciated when we recognize that the faith in its wholeness is not given to an individual instantaneously at the time of conversion, nor even in a gradual presentation of teaching which derives exclusively from the thinking of the present generation. To be 'heirs of God' means that we are heirs as well of the patterns of faith which have unfolded by reason of incessant reflection on the Word of God."

We need, that is to say, the whole of the history of the Christian Church if we are to understand even the comparatively small part of it which has followed the Protestant Reformation. The Medieval Church is, in a very real sense, our Church too. We are heirs of it as well as heirs of the Reformation. And to that Church we all owe a great debt.

This was the Church which, under the pressure of attacks by heresies of all kinds, found itself compelled to reflect deeply on the meaning of its faith. This was the Church which wrestled with the various Trinitarian problems, and with the perplexing and urgent conflicts about the Person of Christ; the Church which was responsible for Nicea and Chalcedon, which preserved the manuscripts of the only existing copies of the Scriptures; the Church which gradually began to realize, through contact with Greek learning, that it must deal meaningfully with the problems, and the products, of a non-Christian culture. This was the Church which gave to the world a new and infinitely more compelling and satisfying philosophic and religious experience than the Greek experience had been. In short, this was the Church which, apart from given theological and philosophical beliefs which we do not share, was responsible for articulating the Christian "mind," which we certainly do share.

THAT LAST STATEMENT, OF COURSE, NEEDS SOME clarification. By "Christian mind" I certainly do not mean the theological mind of the Middle Ages. For although there is more than we sometimes realize with which we can agree, there is a tragically large body of medieval doctrine which no Protestant could accept even if there had been no corruption. In saying that we share a common Christian mind with the Medieval Church I do not mean the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, although many a Protestant would be more than slightly shocked to know that Thomas once wrote, "Nothing is to be received as necessary to salvation which could not be proved by the most certain warrants of Holy Scripture." Nor do I mean any part of the external ritual of the Church such as Vicars, candles, images, monastaries, Mariolatry or saints, although we owe it to the Church of Rome to understand as well as we can the underlying rationale of all of these before we criticize. By "Christian mind" I mean simply the general religious-philosophic orientation to the universe which prevailed during the Middle Ages, the common intellectual

and moral climate which all medieval theologians and philosophers accepted, and in which they all lived and worked. I mean the presence of the very thing which we are sorry that our materialistic, secularized modern culture lacks: the belief in an eternal, personal God, who created ex nihilo a purposive, moral universe in which rational creatures could live significant lives as in His presence; the belief that this God became incarnate, entered into the history of His creation in order to remove the blight of evil for which His creatures were responsible, and who, as Source, Lord and Judge of creation, is directing all events to an end when He will reclaim that universe to Himself.

This mind is that which we share with the Middle Ages. And it still today, over against all alternative minds of necessity or chance, whether of classical antiquity or modernity, is the one which claims our allegiance.

And, therefore, although there is much which we must reject in medieval thought, which resulted from that Christian mind, we ought not make the mistake of identifying the results of the mind with the mind itself. For we cannot but regret the loss of that mind as a perspective from which to assess the significance of human life and as a context within which to live it. We often do, in fact, regret that it has been replaced by something else which we call by the rather general name, the "modern" mind. Only less often, however, do we regret that the heat generated by the growth of Protestant denominations occasioned so many "internal" problems among Protestants themselves that they were often rendered incapable of thinking about the more compelling problems of culture at large. A book needs to be written about how interdenominational warfare helped contribute to the secularizing of the modern world. While our backs were turned, the enemy entered almost unchallenged. In our haste to be uniquely Protestant, we allowed the world to become non-Christian.

For when one stops to think of it, it is almost uncanny that while Martin Luther was saying, "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise," secular forces were at work launching a movement which would question not the foundations of Protestantism merely nor those of Roman Catholicism merely, but the foundations of faith itself. For the modern world, the Protestant vs. Catholic problem was to be a pseudo problem.

It was Nietzsche who once remarked, "Ever since the Copernican Revolution, man has been falling from the center of the universe to an unknown point X, at which he has not yet arrived." For the modern world, the advent of modern science, heralded by the overthrow of the old Ptolemaic universe, destroyed not only some ancient scientific theories; it destroyed man's place in the universe. The rapid growth of scientific knowledge has, for many of our contemporaries, outdated not only this or that form of Christianity, but all that is contained and implied in such an expression as "the age of faith." In the modern age Christianity is still present as a sociological phenomenon, but it is no longer the heartbeat of civilization. It is, if not in retreat, at least on the defensive. Some of the modern poets have been all but obsessed by this. They dwell with great emphasis on the secularization of modern life and the disappearance of the old purposiveness. And we are impressed with it also. We, too, talk about "things falling apart," "hollow men," and the like. And we are no happier about it than the poets. Modern man, we insist, cannot, and will not, find an adequate substitute for the lost dimension of meaning which went with the passing of Christianity. We are thankful that there are still some traces of Christianity in our secular world, even if they are only superficial. In our more optimistic moments we sometimes even speak of a kind of return to religion. And we are glad to see even the faintest signs of it. Convinced that science cannot eliminate the validity and the necessity of faith, we struggle to gain a hearing for what is essentially the same Christian mind.

And yet when we look back to an age in which that mind was present as a decisive pattern for human life, an age in which things did not "fall apart" because of the lack of Christian orientation to reality, we are, nevertheless, strongly tempted (if not positively eager) to make an almost unqualified negative judgment on it. We must, I think, be very careful lest we, on Reformation Day, follow the trend of the modern world and go "modern" in a way all our own. That is, we must not allow ourselves to be caught in the contradictory situation of reacting absolutely against the Church which articulated the mind which we are so anxious to preserve.

A RESPONSIBLE COMMEMORATION OF REFORMATION Day, therefore, whatever else it should include, would seem to be one which penetrates to the real issues and makes some rather careful distinctions. Reacting absolutely seems to be out of the question. It was Martin Luther himself who observed that the drunkard, after having fallen first from one side of his horse, proceeded next to fall from the other. A better way would seem to be that of being truly thankful that there was a Reformation, but at the same time, because we are primarily Christians and only secondarily Protestants, to maintain a sense for the importance of history and for the value of the total Christian tradition. The enthusiasm of our commemoration should be tempered by a genuine sorrow that there was such widespread corruption during the Middle Ages, but at the same time we can be thankful that the Church was not

all bad; that it still, in spite of all the obstacles, could, and did, lead men to Christ. For redemption from sin does not consist of belonging to the right church, or reciting the right creeds or affirming the right confessions. All of these are deeply important, but in the last analysis that which redeems both Protestants and Catholics today is the very same thing which redeemed men during the Middle Ages. And that is the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

Which seems to lead obviously to the observation that redemption from sin is not an institutional affair. And since all men are equally fallen, and equally at odds with God, it seems that no Protestant is more acceptable to God (just because he is a Protestant) than a Roman Catholic. I cannot succeed in imagining that God takes our "labels" seriously. There comes a time when we are stripped of all our seemingly significant human allegiances and loyalties, of all our heritage and tradition, and we stand before God naked and alone. The only heritage we bring with us then is the heritage of Adam — our fallen humanity. And then only repentance and faith matter. Without these all creeds, all theology, all confessions and all traditions are empty and without substance. If the Protestant Reformation teaches us anything, it teaches us humility. A man is justified by faith, and without faith no amount of tradition or theology or heritage or ecclesiastical machinery can ever be an adequate substitute, lest any man boast.

The Student in Context*

Steve J. Van Der Weele

THE BIBLE PASSAGE which has helped me to arrive at the observations I am about to present is James 2:1-9.

One of the penalties of being a student is to be on the receiving end of a continual barrage of exhortation. This exhortation is delivered with varying degrees of tact and persuasiveness, from moral broadsides to a more skillful and more subtle dangling of the prescribed virtues before your mind's eye. But however skillfully presented, the advice exhibits our high expectations of you. They are high indeed. We place before you platforms and programs which, by comparison, make those drafted by political parties relatively easy to fulfill. To be personal about this, I should like to select a hypothetical student and tell you some of the things he would have heard had he taken the courses I have taught to date. (Fortunately, of course, he is only a hypothetical student, and we can therefore assume for illustrative purposes that he is going to college on the ten-year plan). These are some of the things such a hypothetical student of mine has been told.

He has been told both to steep himself in history, but also to avoid false analogies between past and present events. He has been told of the importance of the arts, especially the literary arts, and has been informed that literature is one of the humanistic disciplines which still deals with original sin; but he has also been advised to have respect for the sciences and to be disciplined in his thinking by them. He has been told that he must get to know the occidental genius and dynamic, but has also been admonished to acquaint himself with oriental and other civilizations as well so that he can avoid western parochialism. He has been told of the loyalty he owes to the denomination in which he has been providentially placed and which has provided this fine school for him, but he has been challenged at other times to be intelligently and constructively critical of her works and ways. He has been enjoined to take his religious devotions and the demands of Christian living seriously, but he has also been warned that during his years as a student he should avoid the dangers of involvement in extracurricular work, including excessive involvement even in church affairs, so that he can fulfill his primary responsibility, that of being a student. He has been told to put his studies above all else, but he has also been urged to attend lectures, hear recitals, write for the *Literary Review*, join clubs, and be a loyal sports fan. I have even on occasion offered this student advice on political matters, but this advice seems to have fallen pretty largely on stony soil.

I WISH I COULD SAY TO THIS HYPOTHETICAL STUDENT, and to you, and to myself, that since to do all of these — some of them are mutually exclusive — is impossible, we need not therefore make the attempt. You may protest, understandably, that we are only finite beings, that we are creatures beset with limitations of all sorts, and that about all that anyone can do is stick to his last and by doing so somehow achieve his life's purpose.

But to say this would be to close our eyes to a very important fact. The truth is — whether we wish it so or not, whether we acknowledge the fact or not — that we are creatures of multiple affiliations, that we articulate with all of humanity, that

* This piece was originally given as a chapel talk at Calvin College.

we sustain a complex of ties which is no less than staggering. In other words, Christianity is relational; it comes to expression in a context of relationships. Now, to assert that Christianity is a way of life which must be worked out in terms of the people around us is to challenge several misconceptions that often prevail on our campus. Christianity is not, for example, simply a matter of personal experience, of emotional exhilaration, of living from one inspirational rally to the next, of what has been called "goose bump" Christianity. Nor is Christianity properly exhibited by the formalists, who suppose that the means, the prescribed rituals, the formalities are the important thing. Nor do the zealots and the fanatics do justice to the Christian gospel, those people who assume that only the goals are important, and that any means to achieve them are valid. Nor is Christianity well served by the proponents of rugged individualism, by the student whose code is "every man for himself," and who insists on hacking his way through the world without a by-your-leave from anyone. Nor do they do justice to the Christian faith who insist that the prime virtue of the believer is a rigid hewing to the line of speculative theology and deductive ethics. Now, there is some validity in the approach of each of these groups, to be sure. But each one risks the danger of slighting the great commandment of love: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thy neighbor as thyself.

THE SITUATION OF EACH OF US HERE THIS MORNING is that of a student moving in an academic community. In some respects this community is isolated from the main stream of affairs. It is in some ways a world apart. It is a world which offers us leisure to work at problems which are not narrowly utilitarian. And it is in the context of this academic world, in the relationships of this campus community, that we must for the time being express our Christianity. Our sins and our virtues, our failures and our progress in maturity will transpire in this context.

And since this is still early in the school year, and since coming to school has altered some of your former relationships, it may be well to remind ourselves of the inhabitants of our world. There are, of course, the continuing relationships of parents and kin, although for many of you these will never be the same. Now your respect and love for them may have to be expressed in different ways than honoring their curfew hours; it may now be a matter of honoring the curfew hours of the Administration — or, more pleasant to contemplate, in the letters you write, in which you share with your families something of your experiences here at college. And, of course, if they are subsidizing your education, you have an extra obligation to the sacrifices they have made. There are other relationships. You have a landlord or landlady, many of you. Moreover, you have many people supplying your material necessities. On the campus, of course, there are varying kinds of relationships — to the administration, to your fellow students, to your teachers. As for this last group, your teachers, I need hardly remind you that proper relationships with them includes such obvious matters as honoring your contract by faithful attendance of classes, as punctuality, curiosity, promptness with reports — all minor virtues, to be sure, but manifestations of Christianity in your role as a student. You have relationships also with the student body; there are lonely individuals, despondent ones among you — and you can often help them as much as the faculty or the administration. And may I point out that not all the foreign students among us have been fully accepted, and that some of them have somehow to live with our thoughtless humor.

But although you are students, and although your world is for the time being primarily the campus and your studies, you are perforce involved as well in the larger world of men and affairs. You have ties with the city of Grand Rapids, and you will hardly escape helping to finance our urban renewal program. You sustain a relationship to the church you attend while here at school. You have filiations with the whole of historic Christendom. You sustain relationships with the past, whose achievements place you in its debt; you have obligations to generations yet unborn, and the work of some person or group of people generations hence may be either easier or more difficult because of the quality of your work as a student and what you do with your education. Then, there are the relationships of international life which are impinging upon us so urgently these days. A comment by W. H. Auden may help us to perceive these relationships with more accuracy than our ordinary reading does. He observes that all contemporary civilizations are under a common judgment, and that against the background of this common judgment, the differences between political ideologies are not so great as we like to think they are.

But the relationship that supersedes all others is that which we sustain to the kingdom of God — the kingdom which is everlasting but which for us must be achieved in time and space. It is condescension of the most appalling sort that God should be willing to use us, bunglers as we are, to aid in establishing that kingdom. But that is our calling, our mission, our destiny. And this is to be done through serving our fellow men. Any failure in this responsibility, any exploitation of people, jeopardizes the growth of that kingdom.

IT IS OBVIOUS THAT WE ARE INCAPABLE OF DISCHARGING all these relationships. The reason we are unable is not that we are afflicted with finitude,

as some would have it; we are not poor, helpless creatures, strangers and afraid in a world we never made. Nor does our dilemma arise primarily from the fact that the cultural situation in which we are involved is uncongenial to the exercise of these relationships. Our inability to love our neighbor as ourselves stems rather from the fact that we are sinful creatures, that we have ruptured our alliance with God and our fellow men in perverse and wilfull disobedience. But through regeneration we again at least perceive our obligations. The people who inhabit our world are not there to be taken for granted. They are not there to be snubbed or slighted, exploited or manipulated. They are there to be loved and served and aided on their way, hopefully, to life everlasting.

The day has hardly begun, but already we have failed to exercise these relationships properly. Already we have been egocentric, self-seeking, and lacking in self-denial. Shall we ask God for His pardon, and summon His grace for this new day.

Our Father, we confess that we have sinned and come short of Thy glory. We confess our inadequacy to love all those whom thou hast placed in a relation of dependence and service to us. We acknowledge that we grieve Thee through our self-centeredness and pride. Forgive these transgressions, and give us grace to overcome them. Sustain us in our work this day. Give us the patience to perform the difficult work which precedes the attaining of wisdom. Help us to lay all our achievements at thy feet. Sanctify all the relationships we shall sustain today. Make our commitment to Thee more meaningful with each passing day. Amen.

Which Belgic Confession? (II)

by Leonard Verduin

In the Preface with which the Belgic Confession is introduced in the *Psalter-Hymnal* of the Christian Reformed Church one reads that "de Brès prepared this Confession in the year 1561," a representation that can be read in many another place. But there is good reason to believe that the Confession was ready for the presses two years earlier, and that it would have been printed in 1559 had it not been that Geneva frowned on the project.

All this we know from the testimony of the learned Martin Schoock, a man but one or two generations removed from the events he narrated, a man whose soul for history made him annoyed by the muddled reports then current concerning the Confession's earlier days, so much so that he conducted research in order to ascertain the truth in the matter; a man who as he writes, so he tells us, has the necessary documentation, the original pieces, lying before him; a man who has been demonstrably right at other junctures where just about everybody else was wrong.[1] The research of this erudite man led him to put down: "The question as to by whom this formula of orthodoxy was first drawn up is reported in various ways by sundry people.[2] I have learned from trustworthy documents . . . that the matter stands thus. Already in 1559 Guido de Brès . . . had drawn up certain articles of the orthodox faith, which he thereupon showed to Saravia as the latter was on the point of travelling to Geneva and which were subsequently shown to Calvin and the Genevan theologians toward the end of that year. But since the articles were drawn up in the French language these theologians advised Saravia to admonish the author and the rest of the clergymen of the Low Countries to agree instead with the Confession which the French brethren had drawn up. Saravia, when he was back in the Low Countries, made known to the author the advice of Calvin, by word of mouth as well as by written missive which he carried with him from Geneva. Thereupon de Brès suppressed his articles until the year 1561, when upon the advice of Godfrey van Wingen (but contrary to advice of Saravia, who felt that Geneva should again be consulted) it was sent to Emden for approval, it being considered not advisable to consult Geneva again, seeing that Geneva preferred to have the people of the Low Countries endorse the French Confession of 1559."[3]

According to the findings of this early investigator

1. In one of his writings Prof. Shoock, speaking of the year 1563, says that the Belgic Confession "*ab hoc tempore coepit esse formula consensus.*" He has been often attacked for this assertion, especially by men who were averse to binding creeds. But the Minutes of the Synod of the church "under the cross," held at "Bouton" (pseudonym for Armentières) on April 26 of 1563, show that Shoock was right all along: "*ou la discipline sera desja dressée seront esleus au Senat de l'Eglise anciens avecque les ministres et les Diacres, ausquels on dira leur charges et les signeront la Confession de foy arrestée entre nous. . . .*" This "Confession de foy" can only be the Belgic Confession.

2. The reader may think it odd that there were *diverse* reports in circulation as to who was the author of the Confession. It must be remembered, however, that the men who *revised* the creed in 1566 often were allowed to pass for the *authors* thereof.

3. Cf. Schoock's *De Bonis vulgo Ecclesiasticis Dictis*, pp. 519f. This work is hard to come by in America; the pertinent passage has been printed by Van Langeraad in his *Guido de Bray. . . .* See his p. 97, note 4.

the following items stand out as fixed points in the welter of conflicting opinion: (1) that the Confession is the work of "Guido de Brès, that very devout man, who sealed his testimony with his life" (2) that the Confession was ready for the printer as early as 1559; (3) that it was not laid to the presses until 1561, however, because of a veto from Geneva; (4) that it was published nevertheless in 1561, over Geneva's veto. (Schoock pin-points certain other items — which we shall reserve for future attention.)[4]

ONE COULD GET THE IMPRESSION THAT IT WAS THE language used by de Brès that inspired Geneva's frown. But this seems to be trivial. Are we really to assume that if de Brès had only written in Flemish (which he knew well) then Geneva would have given him the green light? There is, as we shall see, rather good reason to believe that the matter of language was not what gave rise to Geneva's veto. It is much more plausible that it was the tenor of de Brès' articles. As we shall see, a revision of de Brès' work was undertaken almost immediately, in 1566. This revision was undertaken in order to make the most of the situation; in spite of Geneva's discouraging gesture the text as written by de Brès had been printed and could not be recalled; now revision was the next best thing. De Brès' delineation of the duty of the magistrate was less than satisfactory to Geneva; hence the revision of 1566.

If the report of Professor Schoock is accepted (as we shall show it must be), then something happens to the assertion, found in the *Psalter-Hymnal* and in many another place, that "de Brès availed himself to some extent of a Confession of the Reformed Churches of France . . . published two years earlier." According to Schoock the Belgic Confession is exactly as old as is the Gallic or French Creed. But then nothing remains of the idea that de Brès borrowed heavily from the Gallican. Then de Brès did *not* engage in mass plagiarism. It is highly significant that no one accused him of plundering another man's work. There were those who would have liked to suppress de Brès' creedal achievement; and these would have made glad use of the charge of plagiarism. But no one seems to have thought of this. Moreover, there is no external evidence that de Brès followed an already existing document. His work has much more of originality than is commonly supposed, and he was not a vest-pocket edition of John Calvin. One of de Brès' biographers, the Frenchman Daniel Ollier, considers the Belgic Confession to be essentially a recapitulation of what de Brès had already put down in his maiden volume, his *Baston de la Foy*, which saw the light long before there was such a thing as the Gallican Confession. Be this item as it may, it is of course evident that the two creeds have much in common, so much that complete independence is impossible. But that does not as yet prove that the Belgic is dependent on the Gallic. We know that de Brès was in Geneva not long before 1559; he and Antoine Chandieu (who is to be considered the responsible author of the Gallic Confession, not Calvin as is commonly held) may have compared notes before either man began to compile his creed. If so, differences were bound to appear, not the least in the matter of the duty of the magistrate. These differences could very well have made each man go his own way.

IN VIEW OF THE MANY IMPLICATIONS CONTAINED in Schoock's report, attempts have of course been made to discredit him. Van Langeraad, the author of the very excellent biography of de Brès, has perhaps gone the farthest in these attempts. But, as we see it, without success. His main argument is an argument from silence. He points out that years afterward a theologian by the name of Gallasius in a letter to Calvin mentions Saravia but writes as though this Saravia is a stranger to Calvin. Van Langeraad takes this to prove that Saravia never was in Geneva in 1559. But apart from the fact that an argument from silence is always weak, the phenomena of Gallasius's letter are capable of a much more plausible explanation. We know that Saravia saw things from the Genevan point of view, having been Geneva's agent in the attempt to preclude the printing of de Brès' Confession. We also know that he was a leading figure in the revision of 1566, an activity that actually led him to refer to himself as "one of the authors" of the text of 1566. For this man the pre-1566 episode of the Confession was an embarrassment. He had lost out in the attempt to suppress. He would have liked to forget all about the earlier days of the Confession. In fact he did "forget" about them. That this man was not exactly garrulous about the events of 1559, did not go out of his way to keep the facts in the open, is not hard to understand. His assumed silence about the 1559 episode at Geneva, during his interviews with Gallasius, is explicable without recourse to the device of tossing out Schoock's well-considered testimony.

Moreover, if with Van Langeraad and others we reject Schoock's representations, then we raise some really difficult problems. How then explain the genesis of Schoock's report? How did this theologian-professor come to write such fiction, if fiction it is assumed to be? And further, how then shall

4. In an article in the 1838 volume of the *Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* we read, quite similarly, of "*de Geloofsgelijdenis, welke ten jare* 1559, *door Guido de Brès ontworpen, en later, na de goedkeuring der Embdensche Leeraren verkregen to hebben, in* 1562 *in het licht verscheen.*" (This date must of course be altered to 1561 — unless the Dutch translation is meant, which did indeed see the light in 1562.)

ve explain the uncontested fact that when the Confession was printed in 1561 the printing took place vithout receiving or even soliciting Geneva's endorsement? De Brès and his fellow promoters of he Belgic Confession did consult with Emden; why ot Geneva? How can this apparent by-passing of Geneva be explained except on the basis of an nsuccessful attempt to get Genevan's endorsement arlier — as Schoock has it? And how else shall ve explain the fact that the printing of 1561 took lace not at Geneva, as the confused tradition has t, but at Rouen? These difficulties automatically issolve if we let Schook's testimony stand.

Fortunately later historians have seen the weakness of Van Langeraad's argument at this point and ave registered their disagreement with his conlusions. The kindly Christian Sepp refused to go long with Van Langeraad. Perhaps the fact that epp was of Anabaptist vintage will prejudice some f our readers against him. Well, then, there is . L. Rutgers; he also called a halt and said, "In his matter Van Langeraad goes too far."

TRUE ENOUGH, IF WE GO ALONG WITH SCHOOCK THEN ve must accept that there were tensions at about his time between the native sons and the Genevans. To many this will be a painful thought. One gets the impression that Van Langeraad's attempt o eliminate Schoock was born of an unreadiness o accept the idea of such tensions. But the presence f these tensions is simply not to be denied. Tensions, related to the same central problem, the problem of Sacralism vs. Compositism, occurred at several fronts. We are tempted to describe some of hese other areas of tension, but space will not allow hat.

The very fact that in 1566 a revision was undertaken is in itself proof enough that not everyone was happy with the text of 1561. It is an arresting phenomenon, one that has not had the attention that it deserves, that this creedal statement, "adopted with common consent" as the title page has it, and honored as a binding formula of unity in 1563, should be in need of a drastic[5] revision in 1566. Surely it has never happened before nor after that a doctrinal statement was considered in need of revision before it was five years old! Men in the Reformed camp do not usually deal thus flippantly with their formulas of unity.

It must be remembered that the need for revision was thought to be so great that a special Synod was called for it; for revision of the Confession was one of the major items on the docket of this Synod. And on top of this it must be pointed out that to hold a Synod in those troubled times was no small matter. The Synod, we are told, met "in the midst of countless difficulties and perils." Legend has it that as this Synod deliberated, the walls of the very building in which it sat were lit by the flames of the stake. This was no time for theological niceties — *het wonderjaar* was not the time for theological hair-splitting. There must have been something rather big in the air. And there was.

There is some reason to believe that they who were agitating for revision were aware of the radicalness of their proposal to recast a creed but five years old. In order to get the matter on the table without too much disturbance of the peace, so it seems at least, it was decided just previous that "at each meeting of Synod the Belgic Confession is to be read aloud, as much to afford opportunity to express our unity as to give opportunity for revision and emendation."[6] This may well have been an adroit way to get the matter before the house. We do not read of such readings later and we have no evidence for such wide-open opportunity for emendation in later times; probably the idea of reading aloud the Confession fell into oblivion at once, it having served its purpose.

WHY WAS REVISION DEEMED NECESSARY? AND SO soon? As to this matter the same fog of which we spoke earlier seems to have settled in an incredibily short time. One reads all sorts of answers to our question, most of them palpably mere guesses, some of them ostensibly very poor guesses at that, made by men who are in a fog so that they no longer see with any clarity. This is true even of men whose field was history, church history at that.

Here is the view of the venerable Thysius, a man who taught Church History and Symbolics for a great many years, a man whose word usually went for that of an expert in the field. He tells us that the revision "concerned not the matter itself but really only the manner of expression, shorter and clearer formulation." But now that we can lay the two texts next to each other (which he could not as yet do) and make a comparison, we find that the revised text does not have greater brevity and clarity; if anything the earlier text is the briefer and the clearer. Thysius was plainly looking for an answer that escaped him.

The great historian Robert Fruin, who has also concerned himself with our present question, ventures the guess that the revision was undertaken "because everything French was at this moment suspect with the Dutch." Fortunately for him, Fruin introduces this guess with the words "if I mistake not"; this saves the day for him, for his guess is plainly not much good. How can the revision of a Belgic Creed, written in French and re-

5. H. H. Kuyper referred to the revision as "*een duchtige revisie.*" Cf. his *Post Acta*, p. 347. It was even more *duchtig* than he realized.

6. The decision may be read in the Minutes of the Synod held at "Bouton" (pseudonym for Armentières) in the year 1565. The University of Michigan has, in its rare book room, a copy of these Minutes, in manuscript.

vised in French, serve to allay the Dutchman's squeamishness toward everything that was French?

Fruin was apparently not very much impressed with his explanation, for in another place he ventures the guess that the revision was needed "because men had learned to see that you can't entrust so much to a man like Philip II." Again it is good that Fruin lets us know that he is guessing, for he adds "if I am not mistaken." But mistaken he surely is; for an examination of the two versions shows that if anything the revision gives the magistrate the greater leverage.

Still another commentator, Van der Kooy, avers that at the Revision Synod "a committee took the Confession in hand and cast it into ecclesiastical form," a guess that writers after him have taken over uncritically. But an investigation of the two versions fails to reveal any "ecclesiastical form" in the revision but lacking in the original text. Van der Kooy too is in a fog.

Perhaps we will be able to penetrate this fog if once more we listen to the man who has served us so well already, to Martin Schoock. He was the only man in his times, it seems, whose historic sense prevented him from living in peace with legends that were current as to the early episode in the life of the Confession, the only man seemingly that had the urge to filter out if possible the haze that had settled on the landscape. And what he discovered is that the idea of revision was closely related to the fact that the Confession had in 1561 been printed against Geneva's wishes.

Schook wrote: "But when many had been taught by Saravia that they of Geneva had been displeased with the plan of the Dutch to put out a Confession, there was held . . . in the midst of innumerable difficulties and dangers and at Antwerp a secret Synod of the leading Flemish ministers who were then well-known, at which meeting Philip of Marnix himself was present and to which Saravia had been summoned; and after the Confession had been gone over it was approved by all, however with the proviso that they would require the advice of the Genevans in the matter. When Franciscus Junius, more closely acquainted with these theologians, had been commissioned to give this his attention, answer was made by them in November . . . that they had from the beginning received the articles (in which a few things has been altered) as being orthodox . . . and that since it was now already made public so that it could not be recalled they approved it as being in agreement with the Word of God. This Confession was signed by the ministers not only, but also by Louis of Nassau, the Counts of Culemborg and of Bergen, Henry Brederode, and others of the Nobility. . . ."[7]

Now we know why the Revision Synod was called. It was to satisfy those who, coached by Saravia, were less than satisfied with the text as printed against Geneva's wishes.

In our next article we shall, D. V., visit this Revision Synod, listen in and look around.

7. This passage is also available, in the original Latin, in Van Langeraad; see his p. 129, note 1.

LETTERS TO THE JOURNAL

(*Continued from page* 3)

believe he wants us, the people, to be *simply* trusting. Is such trust to be founded on faith and knowledge or on faith and ignorance? Are only formally trained theologians to concern themselves with matters of such import? For years now it has been a common pursuit of the Church that we have an "educated laity." An educated laity is bound to have ideas. Let's hope the conscience(s) of the individual and the organized Church can compromise in love on some of these divisive ideas, love of the *Agape* kind as posited by H. Stob in the June *R. J.*

Sincerely,

WILMA BOUMAN

REPLY

Wilma Bouman raises two questions. The first regards the right of conscience, a matter I hope soon to discuss in this *Journal* on Article 31 of the *Church Order*. I beg her indulgence to answer her first question in this way.

Relative to her second question, I make the following observations: The aspect of infallibility questioned in our churches was so restricted as to make the question highly academic. As such, any and all who were interested and qualified should have carried on their discussion within academic circles. When outside these circles recourse was taken to emotional arguments in order to reach the level of the reader, theological advance was hindered not aided, the issue confused, not clarified.

It is true that educated laymen, no less than educated clergymen, are "bound to have ideas" — and questions and problems. But these thankfully have nothing to do with saving faith. Such ideas and problems are not *creedal* matters. They arise only in those who have first believed to the salvation of their souls and thereafter reflect on what they hold by faith. Such academic reflection therefore does not really raise the problem envisaged by Wilma Bouman, where the faith of the thinking layman is forced simply to trust the theological experts.

As no man by taking thought can add a single cubit to his stature, so no Christian by reflecting on his faith can undo his faith. Any who wish to reflect on their faith are free to do so, but let not him who does, thrust his troubled questions upon him who does not. There are matters that belong in the Creeds, and there are others that belong in the area of academic reflection, and ought to remain there. Infallibility, in the sense in which it was questioned in our churches, is one of the latter. There ought, therefore, to be no official, creedal declaration on this matter. The question does not involve the faith of the Church.

—JAMES DAANE

BOOK REVIEWS

The Doctrine of the Trinity — A clarification of what it attempts to express by Cyril C. Richardson (New York: Abingdon Press, 1959), 159 pp.

Reviewed by JAMES DAANE

Dr. Cyril Richardson, Professor of Church History at Union Theological Seminary of New York, takes the alleged static and stutter out of the doctrine of the trinity by asserting with hi-fi clarity that what this doctrine is falteringly trying to say is that there is no trinity. There is no more reason, according to Dr. Richardson, to say that God is "three" than to say that God is "thirty-three." What both the New Testament and the Church's Confessions are trying to say really is that God is (1) Absolute and (2) Related. As Absolute He is beyond, unrelated, independent, one who loves Himself, and is pure joy. As Related, God is near, related to, even dependent upon His creation: He is one who loves another, and One who experiences the sufferings of His fallen world. God *is* both Absolute and Related, and each in the same sense. He is not first Absolute and then Related, that is, the latter is not derived from the former. Neither is prior to, nor the source of, the other. These two concepts, Absolute and Related, thus understood, and these alone, express the only distinctions that properly characterize the Godhead.

The Biblical, traditional terms, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, do not properly indicate the nature of God according to Dr. Richardson; the term "Holy Spirit" should be dropped altogether, for its only service is to express the fact of the Absolute's relationship to the world, a service fully rendered by the term "Son." The terms "Father" and "Son" ought also to be discarded. The term "Father," because it does not adequately convey the idea of God as Absolute (un-Related, Transcendent), "precisely because it is a term of relationship" (p. 143). The term "Son" should be discarded because it carries the notion that God as Related is *derived* from God as Absolute.

"Father," "Son," and "Holy Spirit" point beyond themselves to the necessity of making distinctions within the Godhead, but they do not themselves adequately express these distinctions. The only valid distinctions are these, that God *is*, equally and in a non-derived sense, both Absolute and Related. God's nature, therefore, not merely appears to be, but *is* paradoxical. "There is no way out of this dilemna" (p. 147).

Dr. Richardson tests the important constructions of the trinity that have arisen in the history of Christian thought — the social trinity, the trinity of revelation, the trinity of love, and others — and he concludes that each one fails properly to express the true nature of God as Absolute and as Related.

Why did the New Testament and the early Church define the nature of God in terms of the trinitarian formulation? They did so, says Professor Richardson, under the influence of the Neo-Platonic notion that the Absolute could not be related to the world except through intermediaries. They seized upon the idea of "Son" (and "Spirit") to cushion the idea that the Absolute could be related to man and his world. They regarded the Son as an emanation, and regarded the Absolute as "Father" in order to *explain* the fact of God's relationship to the world. Thus under the dominance of Greek thought they committed the error of modifying the paradoxical nature of God.

Professor Richardson is brilliant in his analysis of the intellectual difficulties which adhere to the classical Christian doctrine of the trinity. Any Christian thinker will feel the intellectual burden that besets him when he seeks to explain how the term "Father" can be used for the First Person of the Trinity and also for the Trinity itself, as in the Lord's Prayer. He will experience similar difficulties as he faces Professor Richardson's critique of the Holy Spirit. But he will object — or should — to Dr. Richardson's unconcealed notion that the New Testament is simply a part of the general stream of Christian literature that we are, therefore, free to demythologize and to de-Hellenize, as we deem necessary. On what ground does Dr. Richardson conclude that Absoluteness and Relatedness are the only actual distinctions within the Godhead? This conclusion cannot be distilled from the classical doctrine of the trinity. Quite the contrary, as Dr. Richardson candidly admits, this conclusion is destructive of the very idea of the trinity.

Dr. Richardson's error is that he assumes that the New Testament writers had the Greek idea of God as Absolute (un-Related and un-Relatable) and being confronted with Christ (God as Related) proceeded to resolve this paradox in neo-Platonic fashion, that is, to remove the tension by means of intermediaries. But this is a gratuitous assumption.

If Dr. Richardson is brilliant in exposing the intellectual difficulties that adhere to the doctrine of the trinity, he is no more than clever in disposing of the Church's doctrine of the trinity and in proposing his own doctrine of the essentially paradoxical nature of God in 152 pages.

This book will seem not to live up to the promise of its title except to

ANABAPTISM IN FLANDERS

By A. L. E. Verheyden

First comprehensive study of the subject. Presents a new picture of the rise and spread of the movement beginning in 1530; also its tenacity under severe persecution.

Closes a major gap in our knowledge and understanding of continental Anabaptism by a master in the field. 180 pages, $3.75

Order from your bookstore or Dept. RJ

HERALD PRESS **Scottdale, Penn.**

JOHN CALVIN
on
HUMAN REASON
and
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Ph.D. thesis
Over 300 pages
8½x11, plastic binding

Available from the author
at $4.50 per copy,
postpaid.

THE REV. L. NIXON, Ph.D.
138-11 58 Road
Flushing 55, New York

OCT 9 1961

those so naive as to believe that the New Testament writers and the Church herself have until 1958 been trying to say through the doctrine of the trinity that God is not triune.

This is a strange book. It asserts and re-asserts in a manner that would delight the staunchest Calvinist, that man's salvation is by God's grace, and by His grace alone. But it also insists that God is not only gracious (Related) but also in His very essence non-gracious (the Absolute who loves only Himself). This brand of paradoxical theology is no more acceptable than that "orthodoxy" which regards each term of such pairs of oppositional concepts as reprobation and election, love and hatred, as equally definitive of God's nature.

KARL BARTH ON CHALCEDON by Cornelius Van Til (Philadelphia: Press of Maurice Jacobs Inc., 1960). 19 pps.

Reviewed by *JAMES DAANE*

I heartily recommend this pamphlet to all who wish to understand what *Geschichte* means in the theology of Barth. Van Til's presentation of how Barth relates *historie* (history) and *Geschichte* in terms of Chalcedon (i.e., in terms of the relation between the divine and human in Christ), and how Barth does so in such fashion that he must call for a modification of Chalcedon, is lucid and readable. The voice of Barth is heard and his theology appears recognizable. Van Til throws a clear, white light on the ambiguous and elusive notion of *Geschichte* in Barth's thought, although the author's critique does not measure up to his fine presentation.

Your Standard of Excellence since 1912

You always look your best, are your best in a BENTLEY & SIMON pulpit robe. Hand-sewn and custom-tailored for perfect fit, for lasting enjoyment.

CHOIR ROBES, too, individually made in the same quality way.

BENTLEY & SIMON INC.
7 West 36th St.
New York 18, N. Y.

Write for catalog F-7

PULPIT ROBES

Winter is Bitter in Korea

Rescue a Needy Orphan from its Rigors

You Can — For Only Pennies a Day

Sponsor One of These Bereft Waifs as "Mommie or Daddy"

You will be blessed, as many have been, knowing that loving Christian care is being given a Korean boy or girl through your efforts and interest. Just 26 pennies a day — or $8 a month — provides all necessities in our Orphanages, including school tuition charged for in Korea. Ask a friend to be a co-sponsor, $4 each, or interest your Sunday school or other Church or organization groups.

The orphan you select will know you as sponsor. You get the child's picture, life story and mailing address. You can write or send parcels any time you wish. Replies are prompt and in English. Sponsors are indeed THRILLED with this personal contact. Many new sponsors are desperately needed now, before winter begins, to take in many more desolate children wandering the streets.

Heartbreaking Stories of Tragic Lives

You will find this true when you get the life story of the orphan you may select. Number S-1 above is little Lee Ok Ja at our Seaside Christian Orphanage. Her father, a Korean, deserted her mother and secretly married another woman, then disappeared. The mother, a Japanese, left Ok Ja at the police station and fled to her homeland, Japan. The police brought Ok Ja to our Orphanage.

Number S-12 pictured above is An Ung Sub. His father, a farmer, was killed by a bomb during the Korean war. His mother, missing since, deserted him. Ung Sub lived as a beggar from door to door with no place to stay. Finally he was brought into our Eternal Light Orphanage where now he is doing well.

Each day the children at all our Orphanages are taught the Bible, sing Christian songs and earnestly pray. They all attend Church and Sunday School and are led to receive Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. Here you have a God-given opportunity to help in bringing up a child to be a Christian leader in Korea where such are sorely needed.

The ESEA is caring for over 10,000 orphans, children of lepers and war widows. Its work is known widely because its message has gone out month after month in various ways including publicity in numerous religious and secular magazines. It serves more than 12 million meals each year. Help us expand our 106 Homes. Each one is a Christian institution with Bible-believing Staff and Board members. Sponsors are needed to take many more ragged, forsaken children into our Homes ahead of Korea's winter. Write or phone NOW!

THE EVERETT SWANSON EVANGELISTIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
4848 North Leonard Drive Dept. RJ-10 Chicago 31, Ill.

CLIP AND MAIL TODAY

☐ YES I want to sponsor an orphan for one year. My choice is Number . . . . . if this child has already been "adopted" I agree to support another whom you will select. With God's help I will send $8 a month to your office. Please let me have my child's name, picture, address and story. I understand I may continue as long as I wish. Enclosed is support for ☐ first month, ☐ one year. SEND FULL PARTICULARS.

☐ I cannot "adopt" a child but want to help by giving $ . . . . . .

☐ Please mail folder. "Information About Sponsoring Korean Orphans."

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... Zone ..... State .....

Gifts of any amount are welcome. All gifts and sponsorings are income tax deductible.

The Everett Swanson Evangelistic Association, Inc.
An Interdenominational Non-Profit Corporation
Dept. RJ-10, 4848 No. Leonard Dr., Chicago 31, Ill., Tel. Gladstone 6-6181